

Brian Hasler

Indiana State Representative, District 77



Summer, 2001

Dear Friends:

The 2001 long session of the Indiana General Assembly has ended with the passage of a new state budget and several other important pieces of legislation. I am pleased we completed our work on time in a bipartisan manner.

The new two-year state budget includes increased funding for education, CHOICE and other important programs while avoiding a general tax increase. The budget also includes funding for several important local projects that are detailed inside this newsletter.

We passed several other laws that will benefit our state in a variety of areas, including health care, education, crime, election reform and environmental protection. We made improvements to our license branch operations and passed legislation that will protect consumers from annoying telephone calls with the establishment of a do-not-call list. I have described many of these new laws in the next few pages.

In addition, you will find a map of our new legislative district. We are required to redraw the district boundaries every 10 years due to population shifts. I welcome those of you who are new to the district and look forward to working with you in the coming months to make Indiana a better place to live.

Please contact my office if you have additional concerns or questions about state government. You may e-mail me at H77@ai.org or call toll-free at 1-800-382-9842.

Sincerely,

CONTACT REPRESENTATIVE HASLER



RESIDENCE
756 S. Rotherwood
Evansville, IN 47714



LEGISLATIVE OFFICE
House of
Representatives
200 W. Washington
Indianapolis, IN
46204-2786
1-800-382-9842
H77@ai.org

Inside

•The new budget •New legislation •Work force development •District map

New budget increases school support, local development

Going into the 2001 legislative session, many observers felt that a sluggish economy would make it difficult to enact a biennial state budget without either passing a general tax increase or cutting funding for critical areas like public education. However, the budget bill that became law continues our record of avoiding general tax increases, while providing additional state support to our schools, health care and local projects.

The final version of House Enrolled Act 1001 enables the state to increase support for public schools across Indiana by an average of 3.5 percent each of the next two fiscal years, with minimum guarantees built in to help schools avoid cutting programs and personnel. Funding for higher education was increased by an average of 3.2 percent each year.

Services and local development

The budget includes additional funding for the CHOICE program that provides in-home care services for the elderly and disabled, as well as Build Indiana Fund support for research and technology, community wastewater and drinking water grants, airport development and improvements to voting systems.

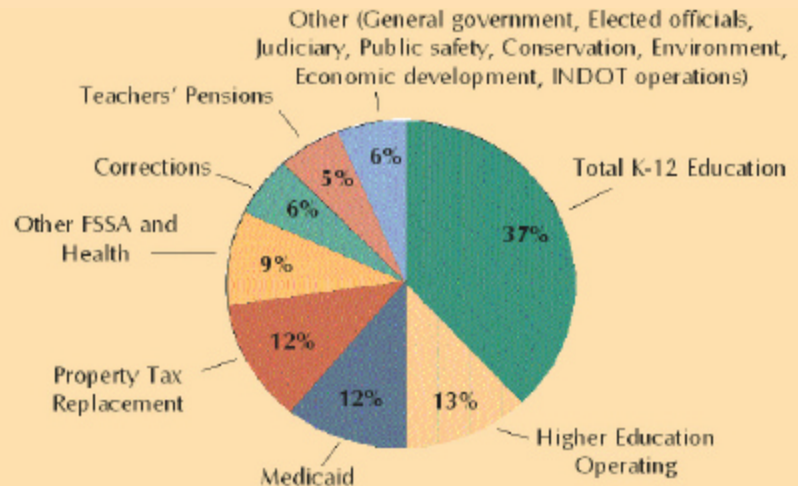
Tax relief

It was disappointing that we were unable to provide the levels of tax relief that were included in past state budgets, but I am pleased that we were able to extend the life of the homestead credit at 10 percent and maintain the earned income tax credit that assists working families on lower incomes.

Businesses and farms will receive an income tax credit on personal property beginning in 2003, and mobile homes have been changed to be treated as real property with similar deductions. The budget bill continues to fund a statewide property tax relief program that now takes about 16 percent off all property taxes. When coupled with the 10 percent homestead credit, that translates to savings of around 26 percent.

A bill the size of the budget does not contain everything I would like, but considering the fiscal restraints facing legislators going into the 2001 session, I feel this budget is a major accomplishment.

Spending highlights from the 2001-2003 budget



Work force development initiative to enhance Hoosier skills



REP. HASLER WORKS WITH REP. PAT BAUER (D - SOUTH BEND) IN THE HOUSE.

The major workforce development initiative to come out of the 2001 legislative session is contained in House Enrolled Act 1962, which creates the Skills 2016 Job Training Program.

Workers already on the job would be able to get access to additional instruction to gain new skills, while those people just entering the workforce would be able to take part in improved industrial and building trades programs offered through such locations as Ivy

Tech State College and Vincennes University.

This program can provide easier access to the instruction and materials that can help our working men and women adapt to the needs of a marketplace that is looking for new types of goods and services.

Since 1997, Hoosiers on moderate and lower incomes have had the chance to use the Individual Development Account (IDA) program to pursue the dream of buying a home, starting a business or going to college. House Enrolled Act 2130 makes that program permanent and expands eligibility requirements to those earning 175 percent of the federal income poverty level.

By setting aside some of their own money, people in the program can obtain state matching funds that can help them own a home, start or invest in a small business or send a child to college.



New laws bring stronger penalties against drugs, domestic violence

Methamphetamine, more commonly known as meth, is a drug that has created increasing problems throughout our state, in rural as well as urban areas. Through House Enrolled Act 1892, which I co-authored, law enforcement officials and courts will gain the tools they need to fight the rising problems caused by meth by placing the penalties for possession and manufacturing the drug on a par with those for cocaine.

Domestic Violence

One of the major accomplishments of the 2001 session is passage of legislation that will help protect victims of domestic violence. HEA 1874 assures that people victimized by domestic violence, stalking and sexual assault do not have to pay a fee in order to obtain a protective order. This change brings Indiana into compliance with the federal Violence Against Women Act of 2000.

The legislation also enables a judge to consider incidents of domestic violence that



REP. HASLER DISCUSSES LEGISLATION WITH LT. GOV. JOE KERNAN.

have taken place in front of a child when sentencing an offender. Indiana will be required to register and enforce protective orders issued by other states. Law enforcement officers and governmental entities will be granted immunity for enforcing an order issued in good faith.

In addition, the measure gives employers the right to seek protective orders on behalf of their workers.

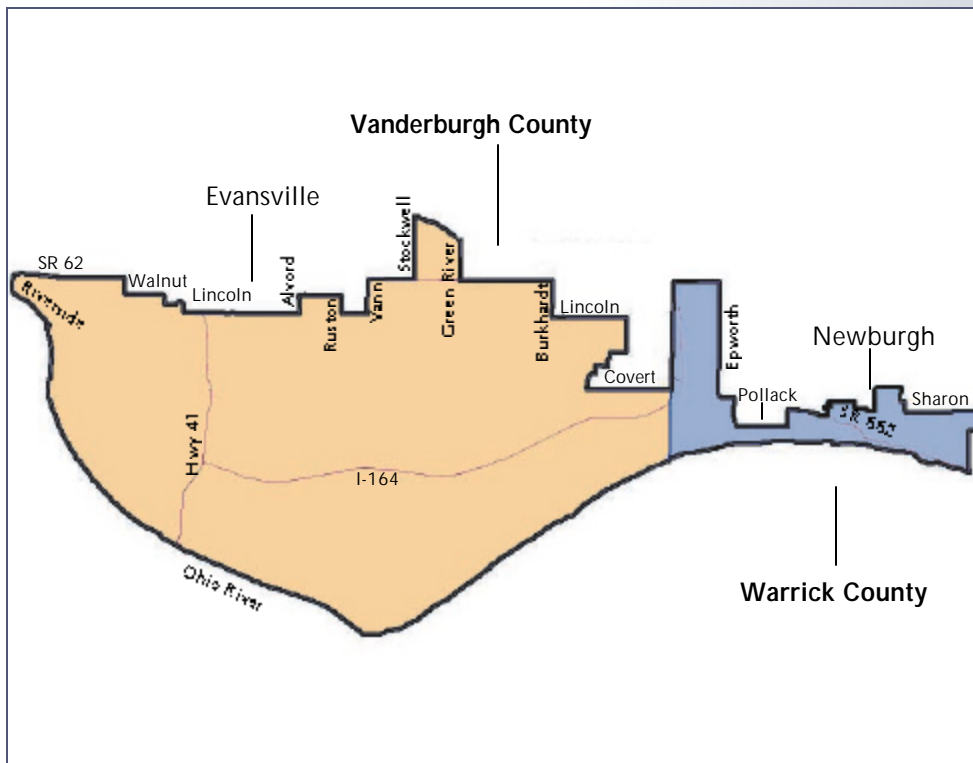
Issues involving our children

Children who turn five years of age by July 1 will be able to **attend kindergarten classes** that fall through a provision included in the state budget. Previously, a child had to be five by June 1.

Indiana's **curfew law for juveniles** was ruled unconstitutional last year, but House Enrolled Act 1084 makes changes in the law to conform with recent cases. These changes enable youths to stay out past the curfew if they are engaged in certain activities protected by federal and state laws, including school and religious functions.

House Enrolled Act 1367 requires employers to give any **teenage worker** a 30-minute break if that employee is working at least six hours in a day.

The new look of District 77



During this year's session you may have heard about redistricting in the news. After each census, the Indiana General Assembly is required by law to redraw House, Senate and Congressional district boundaries according to population changes.

Each district must have 60,000 people, which means that as the population moves to or from various parts of the state, boundaries shift to reflect that change.

District boundaries are very complicated, and it took months of effort and debate among legislators to reach a consensus. In the end, however, I feel that the district lines we have drawn are as fair as possible.

For both the current members and those new to the district, I look forward to serving you. Please contact me if you have questions about the district or any other matters.

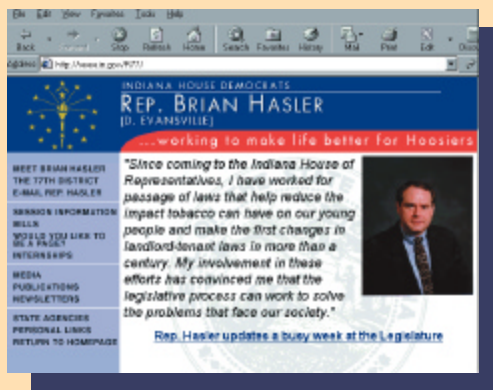


Representative Brian Hasler
200 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2786

Prsrt Std
U.S. Postage
PAID
Indiana House of
Representatives

Privacy from telemarketers and election reform

Stay informed about these
and other issues online with
Representative Hasler



Web: www.in.gov/R77

E-mail: H77@ai.org

House Enrolled Act 1222, which I co-authored, will help reduce the interruption of telemarketers calling you at home. You will be able to have your name placed on a do-not-call list that will **prohibit most solicitors from contacting you via the telephone**. To be placed on the list, contact the Office of the Indiana Attorney General about the **Telephone Privacy List at 1-888-834-9969**.

In the wake of the confusion that took place in the presidential election in Florida last fall, lawmakers in Indiana moved quickly to enact reforms that will change the way we handle elections here.

Senate Enrolled Act 268 gives counties the ability to enter into agreements with the state to purchase **upgraded voting equipment**. This allows counties to take

advantage of the state's ability to purchase large amounts of equipment and materials at discounted prices. Funds contained in the biennial state budget will help the state provide 50 percent matching grants to further reduce those costs. The same legislation also **eliminates the use of punch-card voting** in future elections.

Through provisions contained in House Enrolled Act 1510, the state has moved closer to improving voter registration in Indiana. The Indiana Election Division will make a **voter registration form available on the Internet** that people can download, fill out and mail in to be processed. The legislation also strives to update lists of eligible voters by removing names of people who are deceased and convicted felons who are in prison.